

Medicare

I have in my hands an editorial from the *Toronto Globe and Mail* dated October 12 and outlining in detail the editor's point of view in regard to medicare. I will read for the record the last paragraph of that editorial because it is very relevant. It reads as follows:

This is what can happen when a timetable is given priority over circumstances and judgment. It is not the best way to ensure that Canadians get the best medicare available.

With that I agree. However, this is prefaced by the errors which the government made in instituting the Canada Pension Plan. I am not very proud of standing here this afternoon and saying that I voted for the Canada Pension Plan, and if I had to do it again I would vote against it, proving the truth of the article.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I was somewhat dismayed to read the article in the *Globe and Mail* this morning headed, "Medicare Bill Runs Into Tory Roadblock". If our position in regard to medicare is a roadblock, then I think the author of this article had better read *Hansard* and take a look at our amendment which is a constructive one.

Mr. Orlikow: It is a killing one.

Mr. Winkler: It is not a killing one. As I stated before, if you want to bring medicare in immediately we will support the date of January 1, 1967. I have the support of every member of the Conservative party on that.

Mr. Knowles: The government postponed it for two years but you are postponing it forever.

Mr. Winkler: Of course that is totally wrong. The hon. member just has to look all across the country wherever medical plans are in operation, and I think my hon. friend knows that very well.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I could ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Winkler: I am always delighted to have the Minister of Transport ask me a question.

Mr. Pickersgill: Can the hon. gentleman tell us whether this is his bid for leadership?

Mr. Haidasz: Fulton killed his last night.

Mr. Winkler: My aspirations in political life are to serve Canada and all its people.

Mr. Pickersgill: That sounds like a leader.

Mr. Winkler: I will put it this way, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister of Transport feels that the need for a leader in his party is that great, I will certainly cross the floor.

Mr. Knowles: Don't you think they have enough Tories over there already?

Mr. Winkler: Mr. Speaker, I believe that initially the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) brought in this plan at the time he felt most appropriate to get the support of most of the provinces. Today we know that most of the premiers do not particularly favour the plan which the minister has presented. I am not saying this in a political vein; I am being practical about it. Then we had the innovation whereby the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) delayed the plan until mid-1968. If it has been delayed for economic reasons, and it may well have been so, then I think the government should re-examine its position in regard to other projects which have been mentioned by the government such as the scholarship plan which was also withdrawn.

• (1:40 p.m.)

I do not see how the withdrawal of the scholarship plan would affect this particular piece of legislation now that it is delayed until 1968. Indeed, the Liberal government is considering many other expenditures which might well be deferred, and although the minister made a remark on the position taken by Mr. Hall I still think that the money allocated to education and to the implementation of this legislation should have priority. This has not been done and therefore we can only conclude that the Minister of Finance made his decision very hastily and probably without the agreement of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I do not think that it was for personal reasons, although I must admit that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) is beginning to look a little better every day as the weak ones fall by the way. He is coming forward in great style. I do not believe that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) was serious when he made those remarks a few moments ago. I think that the Minister of Finance is proceeding well in the right direction.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Winkler: Yes.